

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
July 26, 2005**

Members Present: Carroll, Ennis, Harden, Kitson, Lank, Lardizzzone, Magner, Morris, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Timberman, and Wasson

Members Excused: Thompson, Endres and Webb

Staff Present: Davila

Guests: Ed Moczulski (LP Lo-DEL), Dave White (DOL), Burton Barr (NARFE), Reginald Glasby (Veterans Upward Bound Program), Angela Hoag (Wilmington Vet Center) and Bob Furman (DFM)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

Vice-Chairman Morris conducted the meeting in the absence of Chairman Thompson.

Mr. Barr announced that his organization is changing their name to National Active and Retired Association of Retired Federal Employees.

Mr. Moczulski thanked the Commission and Mr. Davila for renewing the contract with People's Place and allowing the LP Lo-Del to go on for another year.

Mr. Glasby presented information about the Upward Bound Program.

Mrs. Hoag wanted everyone to know her husband resigned as the president of VVA and that he will continue to work on the goal of the nursing home.

MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT JUNE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES, SECONDED BY ENNIS, MOTION CARRIED.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Newstadt reported that the Northern Family Advisory Cemetery Committee (FACC) meeting was held on July 19, 2005. The Capital Infrastructure Committee approved \$300,000 for Cemetery upgrades. There will be a meeting on August 4, 2005, which will be followed by the bid process and architect information. The RT 896 wall refurbishing is in process and should be done by the end of August. The Pole barn should be completed by September 30, 2005. The new signs should be up by mid-fall. The kiosk will be held off at the Northern Cemetery until the refurbishing is done, but the Kiosk is in down south. The Southern FACC meeting is scheduled for August 16, 2005. The new markers that are being installed will be completed by the end of September. New mowers and computers have been purchased and we are looking forward to a new phone system at the Southern Cemetery. Any organization interested in erecting a flag pole, which costs about \$400, is required to have three flags on hand so that they may be changed out when they become tattered. The administrators at both Cemeteries are doing a great job. Commissioner Carroll commented that he and others feel that the flag poles should be replaced where they were when the Cemetery first opened. If they are placed in the back of the Cemetery, they will only be seen by those coming and going from the Cemetery; where if they were out front, it would be a beautiful display. Commissioner Morris asked that it be researched as to when it was decided that the flag poles be removed. Mr. Davila stated that if the flag poles are to be moved back to the wall, he would not spend the \$20,000 for a new wall, but would just refurbish the existing one and that will be the extent of it. Commissioner Morris requested that the members canvas their organizations about the issue. Commissioner Carroll will bring it back to the next meeting, but understand that there is already money targeted for fixing this. Mr. Davila reminded everyone that if the flags are put back up front, then the future avenue of flags will not exist. Commissioner Carroll commented that he did not feel that when the vote was made to remove the flags that everyone fully understood the circumstances. Further discussion followed.

COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS

No report.

FINANCE AND LOGISTICS

No report.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Commissioner Carroll reported that as of today, the unexpended balance in the Veterans Home Fund is \$152,769.49. The next Veterans Home Steering Committee meeting will be August 3, 2005.

DFM VETERANS HOME UPDATE

Mr. Furman reported that the design is progressing and the details are being worked out. The site work has begun and by the time the Groundbreaking Ceremony takes place, the exterior walls will be started. The construction is right on schedule for completion at the end of December 2006. Mr. Davila reported that the Governor wants the grand opening to be on December 7, 2006, to coincide with Delaware Day.

GROUNDBREAKING & DEDICATION

Vice-Chairman Morris reported that there was a Groundbreaking meeting and discussed aspects of that meeting. Discussion followed.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Lardizzone reported that the veterans' organizations that transport veterans tried to talk to the legislators about getting a break on E-Z Pass, but they didn't do anything about it. So they are going back to plan B of asking for more money due to the cost being spent on E-Z Pass, as well as other things.

PERSONNEL

Commissioner Lardizzone reported that the service officer position for New Castle County was approved and will be posted in August 2005. Discussion followed.

MONUMENTS & MEMORIALS

Commissioner Kitson reported that some of the pictures are already on the Commission website. He needs additional photos and is in the process of getting more himself.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Newstadt (JWV) – JWV will have their annual picnic at Talley Park on Faulk Rd on August 21, 2005, and everyone is invited. He will be attending the Air Force Association summer dinner on Friday night at the Christiana Hilton and will be giving an update on the progress of the Home and extend an invitation for everyone to attend the Groundbreaking.

Spitzfaden (MOAA) – MOAA will be closed down for July and August, but he will emphasize the Groundbreaking to the members.

Wasson (DELVETS) – The construction phase of their own home off of Naamans Rd is now completed and they are very happy with the results. They now have to furnish it. DELVETS next meeting will be on August 3, 2005, and he will strive to get his members to attend the Groundbreaking.

Harden (WAVES) – Since the WAVES organization will not meet again until September, she sent a copy of the Groundbreaking flyer to each of her members.

Kitson (VFW) – The VFW has their officer training this weekend at the Sheraton. The National Convention is August 20-25, 2005, in Salt Lake City, UT, so he will not be here next month.

Lardizzone (DAV) – Attended the Commander and Adjutant's Orientation in Cold Spring, Kentucky, DAV National Headquarters, July 9-10, 2005. Senator Cook presented DAV a Heart Saver AED for their headquarters building. Nanticoke Hospital is coming up Thursday for training. The National Convention is going to be in Las Vegas, NV, from August 12-18, 2005.

Carroll (MOPH) – August 7th is National Purple Heart Day and New Castle County Chapter 9377 is sponsoring a memorial ceremony for past deceased members. It was a year ago that they dedicated the Purple Heart monument at the Veterans Memorial Park. The ceremony will be at 1:00 PM. They have lost eight members since August 7th of last year. The National Convention will be held in Branson, MO, from August 16-20, 2005. Most chapters suspend their meetings in June, July and August, unless there is important business that comes up for the executive committee. There have been two new MOPH flags taken to the Cemetery to add to the one that is already there. On August 27, 2005, the Sussex County Chapter 1787 will hold their annual summer picnic at Trap Pond State Park, 10:00 AM, and extends an invitation to the rest of our members.

Magner (AMVETS) – AMVETS had their State Convention on June 25, 2005, in Angola. The National Convention will be in Kansas City, MO, August 15-20, 2005. His chapter has taken off for the summer and will resume in September. Commissioner Magner recently returned from Fort Drum, where he went as a National Service Officer for the Purple Heart. He talked to two platoons of the 10th Mountain Division, who recently returned from Iraq, and shared those experiences with the Commission.

Ennis (KWVA) – KWVA's annual picnic will be at the Fox Post #2, Bay Rd, on September 10, 2005, beginning at noon. Anybody in the area is welcome to stop by. His appointment with the Commission expires October 25, 2005, and as department commander, has written a letter to the Governor asking for another appointment, along with two other interested council members. Their next executive council meeting is October 7, 2005, at the American Legion Post #2 in Dover.

Lank (MOWW) – For the Veterans Day Ceremony, the speaker will be General Vavala, Adjutant General for the State of Delaware. MOWW National Convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport, from August 4-7, 2005.

Morris (American Legion) – Annual Convention will be in Hawaii. New officers have been elected and the installation will take place on August 7, 2005. Many of our posts close down for the summer.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Commissioner Newstadt reported that he went to a rally at Asbury Church on Basin Rd in reference to the BRACing of the Delaware Air National Guard in Wilmington. He asked for a listing of the functional areas that show up in the Veterans Home Steering Committee minutes and so forth that do not have an explanation of what they are. Commissioner Morris reported that he was unable to attend the American Legion Convention, but Mr. Davila attended and provided a 15-minute presentation on the Home. Commissioner Spitzfaden mentioned that December 7th was also Pearl Harbor Day. Mr. Barr remarked on the press coverage the Home received recently in the southern Delaware newspapers.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: **AUGUST 23, 2005 (11:00 AM)**

LOCATION: **Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED